TYTLER): (a) to (c) It has been reported by the State Government of Haryana that no such agreement has been signed with the firm of Israel for the construction of Expressway in question. However, *a* Memorandum of Understanding has been executed with the Renong Group of Malaysia in April, 1994 for undertaking the feasibility study of the Expressway on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis in the presence of High Commissioner of India in Malaysia.

Construction of an Express Highway between Madras and Bangalore via Salem

6850. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what arc the details of the traffic between Salem and Cochin and between Madras and Bangalore presently;

(b) whether Government would consider laying Express Highway between Madras and Bangalore linking the same to Cochin via Salem during the century:

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the negative, what steps are being taken to improve the transport facilities;

(d) as on date, how many Express Highways arc being proposed in South India;

(e) what arc the details in this regard such as the population it is expected to serve, the length of the highway, the cost of the project, the year in which it is expected to be completed etc;

(f) whether the Southern States have approached the Central Government with any proposal to include any highway under the Express Highway scheme; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Traffic between Salem and Cochin is 15,000 to 21,000 Passenger Car Units per day and between Madras and Bangalore is 16,400 to 23,500 passenger Car Units per day.

(b) No. Sir.

(c) Improvement of National Highways and transport facilities is a continuous process within the availability of funds.

(d) to (g) Governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have proposed construction of Bangalore-Kalan-Madras route as Express Highway. However, due to resource constraints and other priority considerations, there is no proposal priority to take up this project during the 8th Five Year Plan period.

Alleged Involvement of DTC buses in Smuggling activities

6851. SHRI GHUFRAM AZAM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether DTC buses have been found involved in smuggling activities of drugs from Nepal to India;

(b) whether some of the buses were taken into custody by the border police; and

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, on 10-3-1994 DTC bus No. DHP-2689. plying on Tanakpur-Delhi route was taken into custody by the Custom Authorities at Banbasa for allegedly being in possession of Computer parts reportedly costing Rs. 70,000/-. The passenger, carrying the smuggled goods was apprehended by the Customs and a case was registered against him. The said bus was released on 24-3-1994 after completing necessary formalities.